

EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Meeting of October 7, 2009

Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Members Present: Bill Strassberger (Chair); Marva Deskins (Vice Chair); Anthony Ramirez (Secretary); Eric G. Luedtke (Parliamentarian); Vanessa E. Ali; Thomas J. Aylward; Kim Bobola, Ph.D.; Amjad M. Chaudhry; G. Stanley Doore; David M. Kochanski, Esq.; Peter Myo Khin; Allan Mulligan; Saschane M. Stephenson; Benoy Thomas.

Members Absent: John J. Fausti, Esq. (Vice Chair); Dwayne H. Parris; Alfreda H. Payne, Ph.D.; Odessa Shannon

Staff: Joy Nurmi, (Director, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center), Chuck Crisostomo (Asst. Director, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center) and Anjoo Chohda (SEAA, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center)

Guests: Chief Richard Bowers (Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Department); Mark Pharaoh (ECRAB); Andrew J. Winter (Principal, Greencastle Elementary School); Dolly Kildee (Staff, District 4 Councilmember Nancy Navarro's office); Claire Iseli (Staff, Councilmember Marc Elrich's office); Robert E. Jepson (Associate Vice President, Government Relations & Public Policy, Adventist HealthCare); C. Robert Dalrymple, Esq. (Linowes and Blocher LLP, Attorneys at Law); Craig Pittinger (Vice President, Sienna Corporation, Columbia MD); Barbara Goldberg Goldman (Quorum LLC); Ralph Bennett (Quorum Inc.); Barbara Foresti (White Oak Master Plan); Kristin O'Connor (Senior Planner, M-NCPPC); Frank Carouso (GLCA); Jeanette Der Bedrosian (Gazette reporter); Deborah Kasmi; Teddy Wu (Resident); Queenie McCleary (Resident)

Chair Strassberger welcomed everyone to the board.

Citizen's Forum: Asked the guests to introduce themselves and share their concerns with the board. The floor was opened for questions.

Guests – gave a brief introduction.

Robert Jepson – gave an update on Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) relocation project. The WAH site has been approved, the documents docketed were formally reviewed by the State on September 11, 2009. He highlighted Adventist's memo of understanding with FDA. WAH is open to comments on the application.

Chair Strassberger – asked Washington Adventist Hospital to give an update to the Board at the December meeting.

Mark Pharaoh - gave an update on Parks and Recreation Board. A member of the countywide Recreation Board will serve as a member on their board. Local Region - local boards will be involved. Sligo Creek Golf Course open. Due to budget constraints, the Recreation department has been asked to

make additional budget cuts. There is a cut back on staffing and programs. County officials are looking at the long-term possibility of constructing artificial turf fields to bring in revenue. In December, the countywide recreation board will have an open forum to discuss artificial turf fields but preliminary reports already show that turf fields, like the one built at Montgomery Blair High School or the one planned for Fairland Recreational Park are cost-effective options.

Andrew J. Winter, Principal at Greencastle Elementary school. Mr. Winter shared concerns of the school parents regarding the safety of their children. Families on Castle Boulevard are not feeling safe due to increase of crime rate in the neighborhood. The school is losing children since parents are moving out of the area. School is also losing businesses in partnership at Briggs Chaney. The school staff is not comfortable staying late in the evenings. September 7th was International Walk Your Child to School Day – no one showed up walking to Greencastle Elementary. Mr. Winter suggested forming a task force with Businesses, Police, Department of Health and Human Services, and the District 4 Council member office.

Joy Nurmi- mentioned that the East County Regional Services Center recently formed a task force that includes County police, apartment managers, East County businesses and residents that will be held on a regular basis at our Center. This matter will be discussed at the Director's Report.

Chuck Crisostomo – added that the Center is working on getting a Crime Neighborhood Watch with the Third District Police and Community Liaisons.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

Chair Strassberger – mentioned that there will be two presentations to the board: (i) Chief Richard Bowers, Fire and Rescue Department; and (ii) Barbara Goldberg Goldman, Quorum LLC would share an update on EZ Storage proposal.

1. Speaker- Chief Richard Bowers, Fire and Rescue Division, Montgomery County

Chief Bowers thanked the Board for the invitation. He acknowledged the comments shared by Principal Andrew Winter. The Fire and Rescue Department will do everything possible to support the call for public safety. Chief Bowers will speak with Police Chief Tom Manger on this issue. Thanked Mr. Winter for his time and sharing his concerns.

Mr. Bowers further addressed the board -

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service vision is to keep communities safe and healthy by providing the best fire, rescue, and emergency medical services, utilizing career and volunteer resources. Fire and Rescue is a combination department of 800 volunteers and 200 career Fire Fighters that are providing services to Montgomery County 34 stations. The department responds to all **911 life threatening calls, fire, rescue, and emergency medical services**. Within the **Division of Operations** is the **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** section. The EMS Section serves to coordinate the provision of emergency medical services throughout the County.

The Emergency Communications Center is responsible for the effective performance of all emergency communications relating to a fire, rescue, or emergency medical incidents. From its Communications Center work site, the Communications Section is the primary link between a citizen, who reports an emergency, and the fire and rescue personnel and equipment, who respond to an incident scene. The Communications Section dispatches all emergency fire and rescue resources in Montgomery County. It

also participates in data processing activities for the fire and rescue services and serves as the focal point for other regional governments during mutual emergency operations. Chief Bowers also spoke on the **Safety in the Neighborhood program** and the significant role played by the department. The focus of the department is to make every effort not have a 911 call. Training is a very critical for their department. Currently the department is looking at the response times and resources needed in East County. The department is planning another fire station in the East County in the future.

The floor was opened for suggestions, questions and answers.

Chair Strassberger thanked Chief Bowers for the presentation.

2. Speaker – Craig Pittinger, Vice President, Sienna Corporation

Mr. Pittinger thanked the board for the opportunity to introduce themselves and to provide the information about the company and the proposed building that they hope to locate at the intersection of US Rte 29 and MD 198. The company shared a packet of information with the board that displayed views of the building, how the proposed storage facility will be situated on their property, the proposed building's visibility from various locations as well information about the Company. Mr. Pittinger also spoke about the layout, signage, hours of operation and modern features proposed for the ezStorage facility. The proposed facility will include amenities such as access code, CCTV, climate control, alarms, front-door manager availability. Will also have a two bedroom apartment for the care takers. A number of their employees reside in Burtonsville, Silver Spring and Olney. According to a number of studies conducted by ezStorage and others, approximately 65% of their tenants reside within three miles, and 80% reside within five miles of the buildings in which their possessions are located. They provide valued and direct services to their neighbors. In Burtonsville, they are prepared to invest more than \$14 million dollars translating into an annual amount of \$125,000.00 to \$150,000.00 in real estate taxes, and another \$600,000 in permit and related fees.

The floor was opened for suggestions, questions and answers.

Chair Strassberger thanked Mr. Pittinger for the presentation.

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Strassberger asked for a review of the minutes of the ECCAB Meeting of September 2, 2009.

[October 7, 2009 - 1] A motion to approve the minutes of September 2, 2009 was offered. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Director's Report – Joy Nurmi

Addressed the question of safety to Mr. Andrew Winter, Principal, Greencastle Elementary school. On September 16th at 9:30 a.m. the Center held a meeting with the 3rd district Police, homeowner associations, Councilmember Navarro's office, apartment managers, and business owners in Briggs Chaney and Old Columbia Pike shopping centers. She encouraged apartment managers to invite residents. The main goal is to initiate a dialogue between the Police and the community. The Center will be holding these meetings on a regular basis. The first meeting had very good turnout. Close to 40 people showed up.

Other announcements shared with the board:

ZTA 09-05 Burtonsville Overlay Zone – The ECCAB will hear a presentation from EZ Storage regarding its plans to build a storage facility in Burtonsville. ZTA 09-05 would prohibit this on the site they are considering. The Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee is scheduled to consider this ZTA on October 8 at 2 p.m.

Bills 21-09 & 20-09 – UPDATE: The Council's Management and Fiscal Policy (MFP) Committee voted not to support the provisions of Bills 21-09, Boards, Committees and Commissions – Amendments, and 20-09, Boards, Committees and Commissions – Committee Evaluation Review Board (CERB) recommendations that would have consolidated Citizen Advisory Boards with Citizen Recreation Advisory Boards. A link to the full Council packet is here:
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/agenda/cm/2009/091005/20091005_MFP3-6.pdf

Briggs Chaney - Crime – Residents living on Castle Boulevard and business owners in the Briggs Chaney/Old Columbia Pike shopping have grown concerned about their safety because of increasing crime in their community. Following the shooting at the Briggs Chaney Shopping Center and the murder on Castle Boulevard, the ECRSC held a meeting with police/State's Attorney/HOC on September 16th. About 40 people attended and engaged in a good dialogue with police. Property managers and business owners were very happy to learn that there will be regular meetings with police to facilitate information sharing and prevention strategies. Residents from nearby communities felt their concerns about increasing crime were being heard and taken seriously by police.

Based on concerns raised by businesses, we are working with the Police community liaison officer to suggest further safety improvements at the Briggs Chaney Shopping Center.

IDA Sector meeting – On October 22nd, at 9:30 a.m., the Center will host the first in a series of community meetings with the 3rd District police precinct to discuss resident and business concerns and to have the police provide an update on criminal activity in the region.

MD 650 and Quaint Acres Drive Stoplight – No decision yet from State Highway Administration (SHA).

Community Service Day - The ECCAB's project is focused on Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October). We are working with our Board and other community members to collect needed items for the women and children at the Betty Ann Krahnke Shelter: soap, lotion, bubble bath/shampoo or travel/toiletry kits, books, puzzles, coloring books, crayons, small toys, etc. People's Community Baptist Church has already made a significant donation and will be partnering with us to promote our event, which will involve children making gift bags to pack these items for the women and children victims.

Fire Station 37 – The site evaluation process for this station, which will be located somewhere in the Calverton area is projected to start in January or February.

Chair's Report – Bill Strassberger

1. Welcomed new board member, Ms. Saschane M. Stephenson.

Ms. Saschane M. Stephenson – gave a brief introduction to the board.

2. John Fausti, Esq. has resigned the board due to personal reasons.

3. This Sunday, Burtonsville Fire Station is holding an open house. Asked members to support the event.

4. Thanked members for their participation and for the success of Burtonsville Day,

Council's Report:

Dolly Kildee, Councilmember Nancy Navarro

Sligo Creek Golf Course –The Council appropriated the money to keep it open for a year.
Speed Control Strategies – speed cameras. Safe Law went into effect on October 1, 2009. Restricted speed limits in school zones are in effect from 6:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. The Council is supporting Community Services Day – Council staff will be cleaning at the Maydale Park.

Claire Iseli, Councilmember Marc Elrich

Council Growth Policy and Gaithersburg Master Plan. Both could affect how many jobs come to the East County region. Council member Elrich is concerned.

Code Enforcement Legislation – Discussed tow truck parking in residential areas. Zoning Text Amendment dealing with this issue will come back to the Council next week.

Kim Bobola- questioned what will be the impact of jobs in East County?

Clair Iseli – There are plans to bring high level life sciences jobs to East County with the FDA coming in. But the Gaithersburg West Plan being considered at the Council also plans for a big increase in life sciences jobs, which could detract from East County's plans. Council member Elrich is looking at the Gaithersburg West plan to gauge its affect on East County. The Gaithersburg Master Plan is available online.

Committee Reports –

Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee: Tom Aylward

The committee discussed development of businesses in and around Burtonsville and the Burtonsville Legacy Plan. The committee has not developed a recommendation on the proposal by ezStorage, an educated decision has to be made.

Outreach Committee: Amjad M. Chaudhry

The committee discussed and seeks the approval of the board to conduct outreach to Faith-based groups to learn about their problems. The committee is willing to bring the concerns of the Faith-based groups to the table. However, Mr. Chaudhry needs to confirm this with the board before they can approach the Faith groups.

Peter Myo Khin – suggested they contact the Civic Associations.

Chair Strassberger – asked the committee to come forth with a plan.

Services Committee: Anthony Ramirez, Chair

The committee had a productive meeting. The Committee has been planning for Community Services Day participation. Kim Bobola has great ideas for services committee to hold a session on Tech and Education, H1N1 response and Public Education. Can provide information to the public. On the issue of honoring Stuart Rochester, the committee has spoken with Delegate Herman Taylor. The committee will present their ideas to the Board at the next meeting.

Old Business:

Kim Bobola – inquired on the date for the visit to FDA.

Joy Nurmi – Chuck is working with FDA. Joy and Chuck attended the Lab Quest meeting last week. Working on the bus schedule.

Chair Strassberger- plans to set the FDA tour in early November on a Saturday morning from 9:00 – noon. The date will be decided.

Kim Bobola – would like to pursue Senator Ben Cardin’s funding for FDA.

Amjad M. Chaudhry- addressed a resident concern about the Mosque on Briggs Chaney.

Dolly Kildee – clarified that their office has received an approval report from the Department of Permitting Services on the Mosque.

New Business

Joy Nurmi – reminded the board members that any contacts to the County Council and/or County Executive should be addressed as a resident and not as an ECCAB member.

Tom Aylward – would like ZTA 09-05 to go away since it is an inadequate and insignificant investment in Burtonsville. A discussion took place between the Board members and representatives of ezStorage.

Tom Aylward made a motion–

[October 7, 2009 - 2] A motion to the board produce a letter to reverse its position to support ZTA 09-05. The motion was seconded by David Kochanski.

Another discussion started between the members, council member representative and representatives of ezStorage.

Eric Luedtke – disagreed with Tom Aylward’s motion. The intent of the Overlay zone was to bring jobs to the East County, and ezStorage is bringing only four jobs.

Stan Doore- supports the presentation by ezStorage.

Peter Myo Khin - supports the presentation by ezStorage – having grandfathered ezStorage business, we need to ensure what future businesses will be set up in Burtonsville.

Anthony Ramirez – agrees with Peter Myo Khin’s suggestion.

Peter Myo Khin – we need to move to amend the Motion placed on the table to “grandfather” ezStorage and that ZTA needs to preclude any further storage units in the Overlay zone.

Chair Strassberger – suggests to amend the letter previously submitted on July 9, 2009 that the board supports ZTA 09-05.

1. Grandfather ezStorage and urge the Council to edit the Zoning Text Amendment.
2. Please clarify that no other storage facility will be allowed in the Burtonsville Employment Overlay Zone.

Tom Aylward – agreed to Peter Myo Khin’s suggestions.

Chair Strassberger restated the motion on the table–

[October 7, 2009 - 3] A motion to amend the letter dated July 9th whereby ezStorage facility will be grandfathered in ZTA 09-05 and preclude additional self storage facility in that zone was offered. The motion was passed.

Eric G. Luedtke – moved that the East County Citizens Advisory Board advocate for re-opening of Fairland Master Plan.

Chair Strassberger:

[October 7, 2009 - 4] A motion to re-open the Fairland Master Plan was referred to the Economic Development Committee. The motion was seconded by Tom Aylward.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. **The next meeting of ECCAB is scheduled for November 4th 2009.**